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*A Plan for Park
Street Revitalization*


Alameda, California



A Plan for Park Street Revitalization

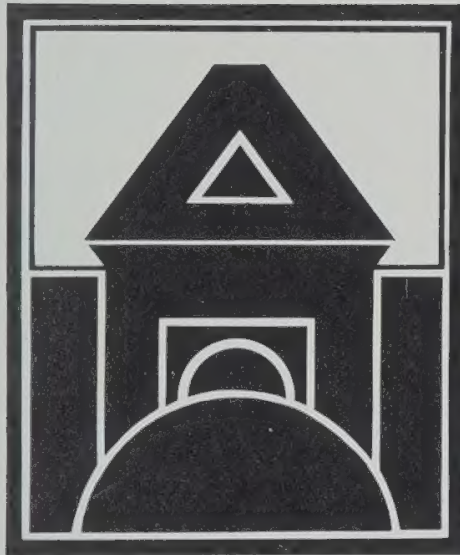
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March 1, 1979



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In keeping with the guidance set forth in the Community Goals Study, on October 20, 1975 the Alameda City Planning Board formed a subcommittee or Downtown Revitalization Committee to assess the ways and means to promote commercial enterprise in Alameda through sound planning and cooperation between local government and the private sector.

The committee consisted of three Planning Board members - Don Perata, Olga D'Amante, and Phil Long; John Leavitt, Don Lindsey, Harry Potter, and Jackie White (Secretary to the committee) from the Chamber of Commerce; Skip Howard from the West Alameda Business Association; Ron Livesey from the East Alameda Business Association; Dave Simmons from the Transportation Task Force; and Li Volin from the League of Women Voters. Peter Braun served as Planning Staff consultant.

This committee recognized that a revitalization of the downtown areas could benefit Alameda as a whole. A more attractive, accessible and shopper-oriented downtown would mean increased tax revenues to the City, additional shopping opportunities for the consumer, and a source of community pride to the resident.

Initially, the committee charged itself with developing a systematic program to regenerate the existing downtown areas in Alameda. After some preliminary research and discussion, the committee focused its attention on a "target" area of Park Street, and began its one year analyses and deliberations which led to this report.

Don Perata, Chairman



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Target Area



The objectives of the Downtown Revitalization Committee are to define the various problems facing the Park Street Business District and to propose solutions for its revitalization and upgrading as a commercial center. This report is submitted as an Initial Study presenting the findings of the committee to date and outlining future directions, adding to a specific plan which will contain the committee's final recommendations. Acknowledging the existence of several business districts in Alameda, the committee has chosen initially to develop an area plan for a portion of the Park Street District. The emphasis of this manual will be concentrated within the area outlined. The area represents the core of the business district containing the majority of retail and customer service oriented business establishments. Proposals have been developed that will humanize and strengthen the shopping and business climate in the target area. The following are the underlying goals upon which the committee based its objectives and recommendations:

1. Stimulation and strengthening of retail and customer service establishments.
2. Stimulation of higher retail sales volume.
3. Enhancement of the pedestrian environment.

These goals formed the basis for development of the committee's recommendations, which are directed at physical, economic and social revitalization of the district.



What Happened to Downtown

Park Street's history as a commercial center reaches back over a century to 1864 when Alfred A. Cohen extended the San Francisco and Alameda Railroad to a new station at the intersection of Lincoln Avenue and Park Street. Local commercial development received a further boost in 1869 when the Alameda Station became the first bayside terminal of the new transcontinental railway on the final Sacramento-to-San Francisco leg. At the decline of the railway, the construction of the Park Street Bridge in 1902 supplied impetus for continued growth well into this century.

If the railroad fostered the birth of this downtown, the automobile suggested its form. As if on cue, commercial development took a linear course along Park Street and became what geographers identify as "the strip". Glorified in popular nostalgia films depicting the 40's and 50's, strip development was a result of an increasingly auto-oriented culture.

The 60's saw the economic decline of strip downtowns across the nation when they

could no longer compete with specialized shopping centers offering centralized and more convenient facilities for shoppers and cars. The construction of the South Shore and Fernside Shopping Centers in Alameda drew shoppers, business, and activity away from Park Street which had a considerable economic impact. At present the district enjoys a degree of economic stability though it is operating far below potential.

The economic decline of downtown was a phenomenon experienced in cities across the nation. Many of these cities are now making efforts towards social, economic and physical revitalization of their urban centers. Community and civic leaders have rallied together to define problems, assess needs, plan strategies, and creatively seek private and public resources to achieve their redevelopment goals. In many instances their efforts have been rewarded with success in the re-establishment of their downtown as a center of urban activity.

Community Survey

The Community Goals Study made in 1975 investigated citizen attitude toward the Park Street Business District. The resulting report identified specific problems and developed goal statements for the area.

The Community Task Force on Planned Growth pointed out that the existing commercial facilities on Park Street are not being used to their fullest potential. It further indicated the need for commercial facilities to provide the range of merchandise and services desired by the people of Alameda. The Task Force called for facilities which are **pleasing in appearance** and **easily accessible**, which will encourage spending in the City and result in an increase of revenue. One of the express goals cited in the report was to cultivate and revitalize the Park Street commercial district into a shopping area favored by the people of Alameda.

The Community Task Force on Economic Development stated that commercial areas must be made more attractive and convenient to all residents and visitors; that they be planned and developed as pleasant, cohesive shopping and service areas offering better access and easier parking for both consumer and supplier. The Park Street commercial area as a primary entrance route to the City was specifically targeted as needing improvement. To further these objectives the task force made the following proposals:

- A. Many storefronts in the commercial area need improvement to further the development of a pleasant shopping district.
- B. The retail areas should be landscaped to create a more pleasant atmosphere.
- C. A design concept for the retail area should be developed.

- D. Parking is a deterrent for some citizens to use the present shopping district. The City should acquire property adjacent to the retail areas for additional parking.
- E. A traffic circulation plan for major shopping districts should be developed involving the use of synchronized lights, enforcement of parking and scheduling of deliveries around peak traffic hours.

The results of a questionnaire circulated to Park Street merchants in 1976 revealed similar attitudes and desires:

71% were willing to participate in an area improvement program.

63% favored the development of landscaped areas.

61% favored the development of pedestrian amenities in the shopping district.

72% considered parking a problem.



Downtown's Strengths

ECONOMIC

The decline of the Park Street District as a source of economic support for the City has been evident for a number of years. Though records indicate that the sales tax revenues have increased over the years, increases in the rate of inflation, not in sales volume, have been the major component of this apparent growth. Although some individual businesses in the district have enjoyed an actual increase in sales, other establishments have experienced a leveling-off or even decline in sales volume. An example of this dichotomous trend can be seen in the change in gross receipts from the following two industries:

The restaurant/lounge establishments have grown considerably, from a yearly income of just 8.7 million dollars* in 1960 to over 16 million dollars in 1975. The success of this industry is indicative of its ability to draw customers from outside the City. The apparel stores in Alameda as a whole, have gone down from 5.5 million dollars* in 1960 to only 4.8 million dollars in 1975, exemplary of a declining retail industry.

The components of retail demand are population and income. Census figures indicate a one percent per year population growth for Alameda. This growing population of 76,000 with a median income of

\$15,500 comprises a substantial consumer market for the Park Street merchant. Surveys indicate that the potential dollar value for retail goods and services (excluding automotive needs) from Alameda households alone is about 100 million annually.

The buying power of East Bay residents represents another potential source of revenue for the Park Street merchant. The more successful businesses in Alameda have appealed to a market area beyond the Alameda city limits. The Park Street district, as a whole, could benefit from the customer-generating abilities of these successful businesses, in addition to re-establishing local patronage.

The ability of the Park Street district to capture a share of this potential depends upon the quality and scope of the merchandise and services offered, the attractiveness and practicality of the facilities of the district, and the merchandising abilities and attitudes of its business people.

A shopping center survey made in 1974 as part of a retail market analysis of Alameda indicated a high dissatisfaction with Park Street with respect to variety of merchandise, availability of parking and overall appearance. Amenity factors singled out included small shops, wide streets, trees, and availability of busses. Physical revitalization can solve many of these problems and enhance existing amenities, but cooperation, support, and individual effort on the part of the Park Street business people are essential to a viable economic revitalization program.

**1975 dollars*





SOCIAL

The Social character of the Park Street District is marked by a dynamic mix of people attracted by employment, recreation, entertainment, education, in addition to shopping. This is largely due to the variety of land use(s) in the district which generates a rich pedestrian culture lacking in specialized shopping centers. Pedestrian activity is a resource to be valued and nurtured, for developing business downtown is ultimately a function of getting people to come downtown.

The urban fabric of the Park Street district can be strengthened by providing pedestrian links between the nodes of activity represented by the Civic Center, library, theatre, high school, business establishments and residential pockets. In this way, public and private open space such as sidewalks, alleys, pathways, and even parking lots become settings for social interaction, and downtown as a whole will communicate a sense of place.

This sense of place is a marketable commodity in itself. It contributes largely in the creation of an attractive atmosphere where people will stay longer and walk farther; and this increases likelihood of purchase. A correlation also exists between atmosphere and pulling power. A study made at several suburban shopping centers showed that the people who travelled the longest distances to their favorite centers also gave them the highest overall "atmospheric" ratings. Physical revitalization, by contributing to an attractive atmosphere, thus serves a double purpose. It reinforces the existing urban fabric by providing settings for social interaction, and it gives downtown a unified physical image as the financial, retail, cultural, and political center of Alameda.

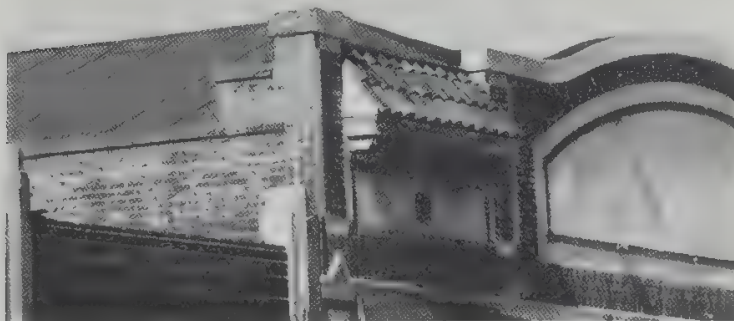
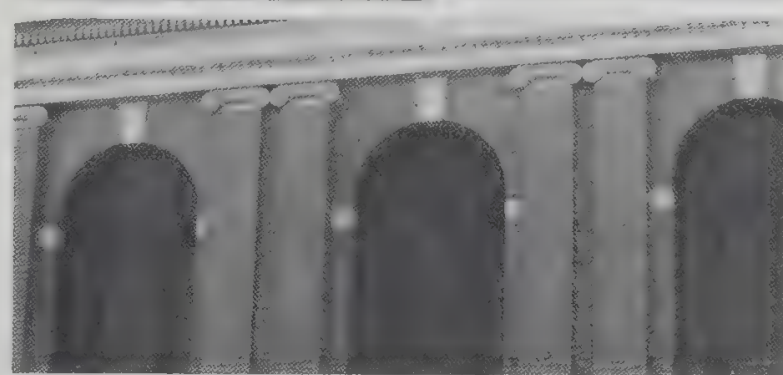


PHYSICAL

A careful investigation of the Park Street district reveals architectural resources not found in modern shopping centers. Victorian, neo-classical, art deco and moderne buildings stand together as eloquent vestiges of Alameda's past. Park Street building facades create a visual rhythm by their varying heights and differing rooflines.

But few visitors downtown would notice this charming character. Otherwise attractive facades are disguised by chipped and faded paint, torn awnings, and excessive, oversized signs. Sidewalks which are often dirty and discolored are cluttered with unsightly newspaper stands impeding pedestrian flow. Heavy automobile traffic produces sounds and odors that challenge the hardest shopper.

Physical revitalization can bring the visual character of the district back into focus. The beautification and restoration of buildings uncover their latent charm. Street furniture provides an orderly place for newspapers, a place for trash, comfortable rest areas for shoppers, shelter for bus-riders, and secure parking facilities for bicyclists. New parking areas reduce traffic congestion by eliminating cars seeking a parking place. Street trees muffle traffic noise and soften hard line. New paving compliments shop facades and visually identifies pedestrian areas. Individual improvements work together to create an attractive, unique and exciting atmosphere where physical strengths, not weaknesses, are salient characteristics.



In summary, the objective of the downtown revitalization program is threefold:

Economic revitalization

- ensuring stability for the individual business man
- creating new jobs
- providing a continuing source of revenue for the City

Social revitalization

- fulfilling needs of the young and old
- restoring activity and liveliness to the district
- fostering a sense of community in residents and workers in the district

Physical revitalization

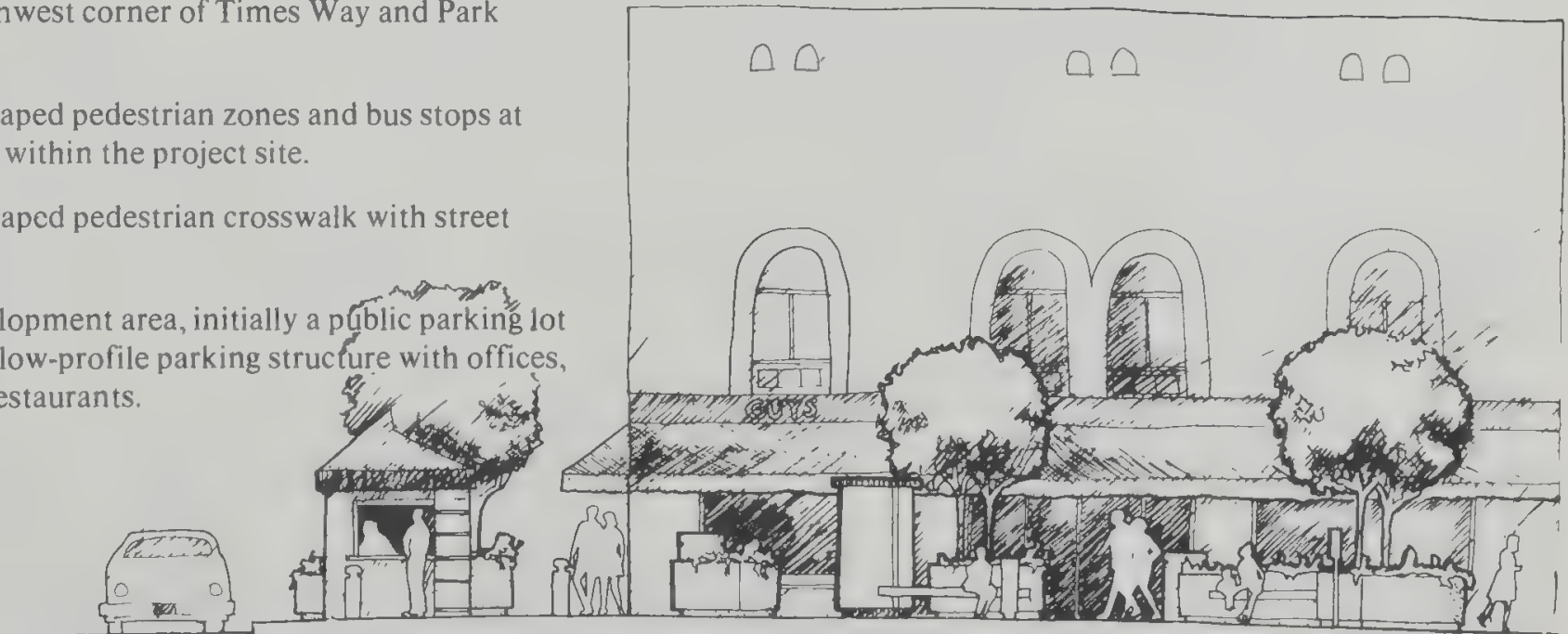
- creating a safe, convenient and attractive physical environment
- promoting a community image
- pedestrianizing downtown

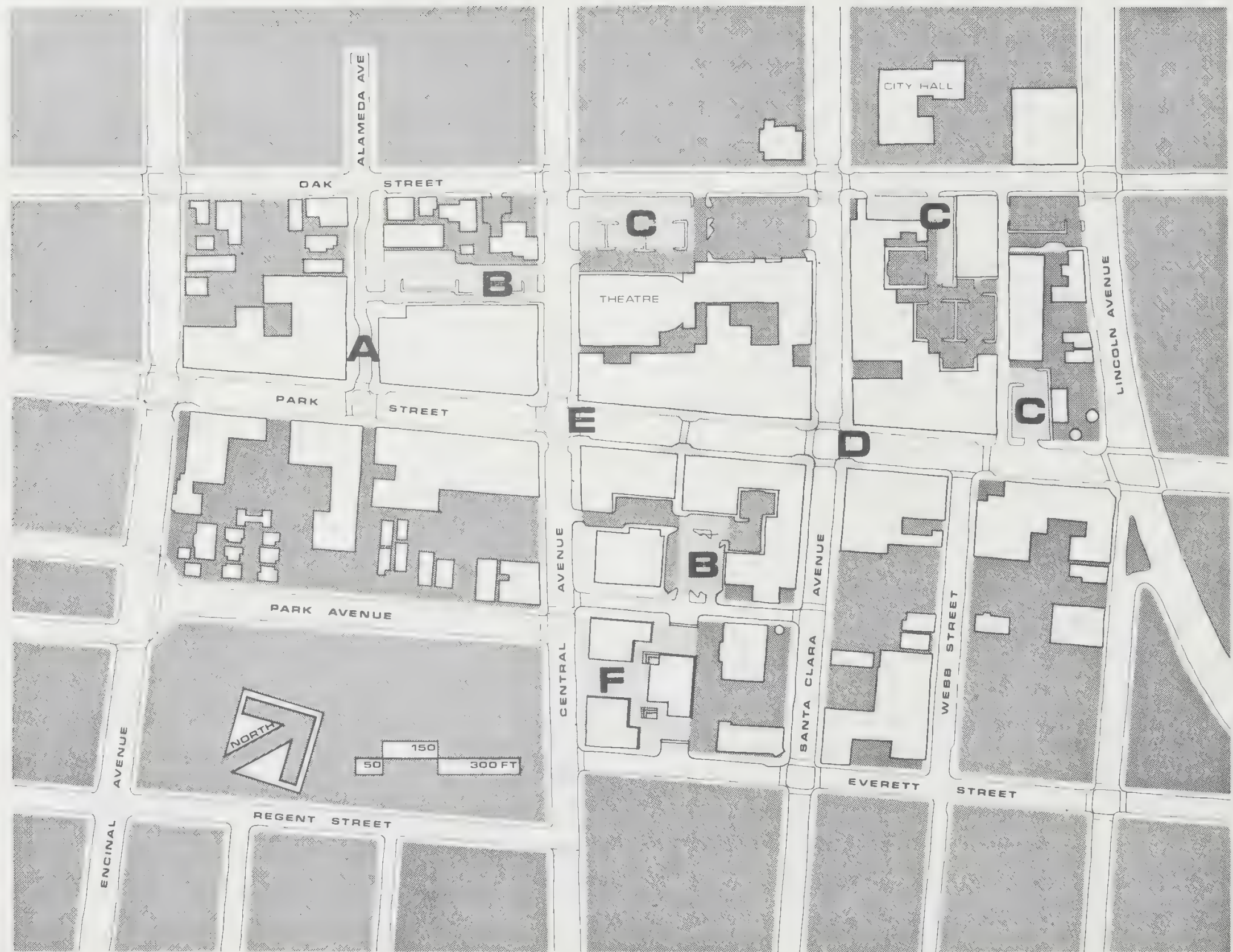


Summary Plan

The major plan proposals are as follows. The drawing illustrates the final phase of the capital improvement program.

- A. A landscaped semi-mall providing limited vehicular access to municipal parking lot C, and to merchants fronting the semi-mall.
- B. Improvements to existing municipal lots A and C.
- C. Three suggested sites for additional public parking lots.
 - 1. At the northeast corner of Oak Street and Central Avenue.
 - 2. At the northeast corner of Oak Street and Santa Clara.
 - 3. At the northwest corner of Times Way and Park Street.
- D. Expanded landscaped pedestrian zones and bus stops at key intersections within the project site.
- E. Mid-block landscaped pedestrian crosswalk with street furniture.
- F. A two-stage development area, initially a public parking lot expanding into a low-profile parking structure with offices, retail space and restaurants.

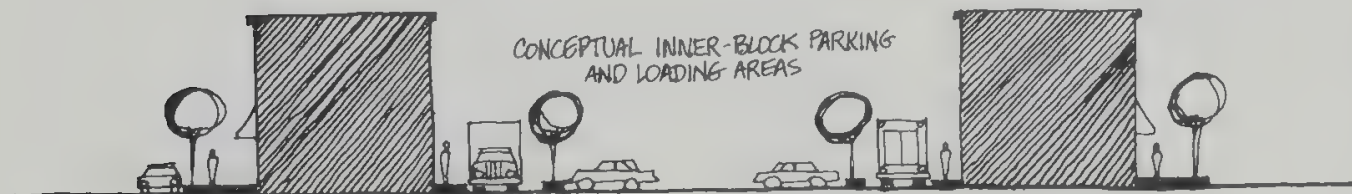




Circulation

The Transportation Task Force of the Community Goals Study found that traffic density and parking were prime disincentives to shopping in the Park Street district. As Park Street Bridge is a main access point to the island, the Park Street district must unfortunately bear the subsequent traffic which would otherwise be routed through quiet residential areas. Traffic flow on Park Street has been recently aided by the restriction of left turns on and off the street during the late afternoon. The impact of traffic on the district can be further alleviated by:

1. Left turn lanes for traffic coming off the bridge before it reaches the main Park Street area.
2. Synchronized traffic lights to facilitate flow through the district.
3. Physical choking (the widening of sidewalks at intersections), to reduce automobile speeds, and allow pedestrians more open space.
4. Encouraging development of loading areas at rear entrances to shops where possible.
5. Scheduling of truck deliveries around peak traffic hours.
6. Improving parking facilities to eliminate senseless circulating cars.
7. Incentives to use alternative modes of transportation such as pedestrian amenities, bicycle facilities, more and frequent bus service.



Parking

The inadequacy of parking facilities is a concern felt by both Park Street merchants and shoppers. This inadequacy is largely due to inefficient use of present facilities rather than an insufficient number of spaces. Improving efficiency in the District will have a two-fold effect. Studies of traffic problems have shown air pollution to be related to autoists moving slowly around block after block seeking a parking place. By eliminating this phenomenon, air quality as well as traffic flow will be improved.

INVENTORY

The Park Street District currently has a total of 473 public metered parking spaces and 475 private spaces. Public spaces are distributed in two municipal lots A and C (which together, accommodate 137 spaces) and on-street curb parking (336 spaces).

ON-STREET CURB PARKING

The on-street metered parking provides shoppers/customers with convenient short-term parking throughout the District. Strict enforcement of the two-hour limit will discourage meter-feeding and allow each curb stall to turn over four times during an 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. business day. This means that 336 curb spaces can accommodate 1,344 cars during a typical peak shopping period. The cost of metered parking should be raised to provide revenues for parking enforcement, lot maintenance and acquisition of additional off-street parking.

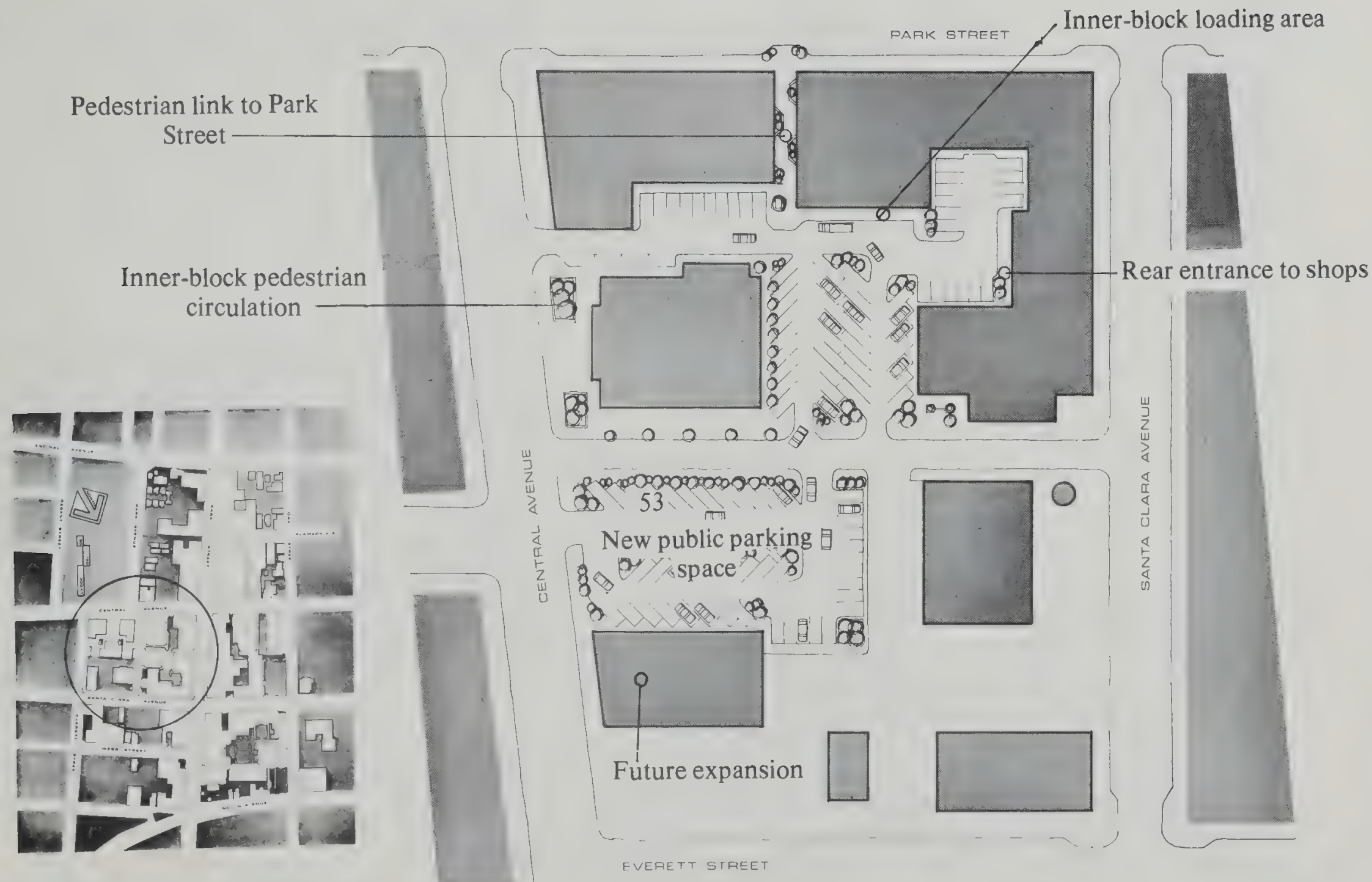


OFF-STREET LOT PARKING

Parking in the District's municipal lots by long-term patrons poses problems for short-term customers. The stalls most convenient to the shopping areas are oftentimes filled by parkers with meter belts which minimizes parking turnover at these key locations. Designating special areas for meter belt parking and enforcing time limits on metered stalls optimizes off-street parking facilities. A three-hour time limit on 90 municipal lot metered spaces allows a triple turnover during an 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. business day accommodating a total of 270 cars. The remaining 47 metered spaces will be available for metered belt patrons.

The two municipal lots do not presently meet minimum vehicular movement requirements for parking lots. This results in impaired movement and unnecessary damage to vehicles using these lots. Upgrading the municipal lots to conform to traffic engineering standards will provide greater use efficiency. To offset any loss in overall parking spaces resulting from the restructuring of municipal lots, several locations are suggested for acquisition and development as additional parking areas. These locations are selected for their proximity to those areas presently in need of adequate public parking.

IMPROVEMENTS TO MUNI LOT A





LOADING AREAS

Many commercial businesses along Park Street require loading areas. Where possible loading areas at rear entrances to shops should be developed. In other locations a convenient on-street loading zone will be established on each block where required. Although delivery trucks are permitted to legally double park and always do regardless of availability of loading zones, these zones do provide a convenient passageway for the transfer of goods from truck to sidewalk. Several businesses have their own delivery functions which require loading

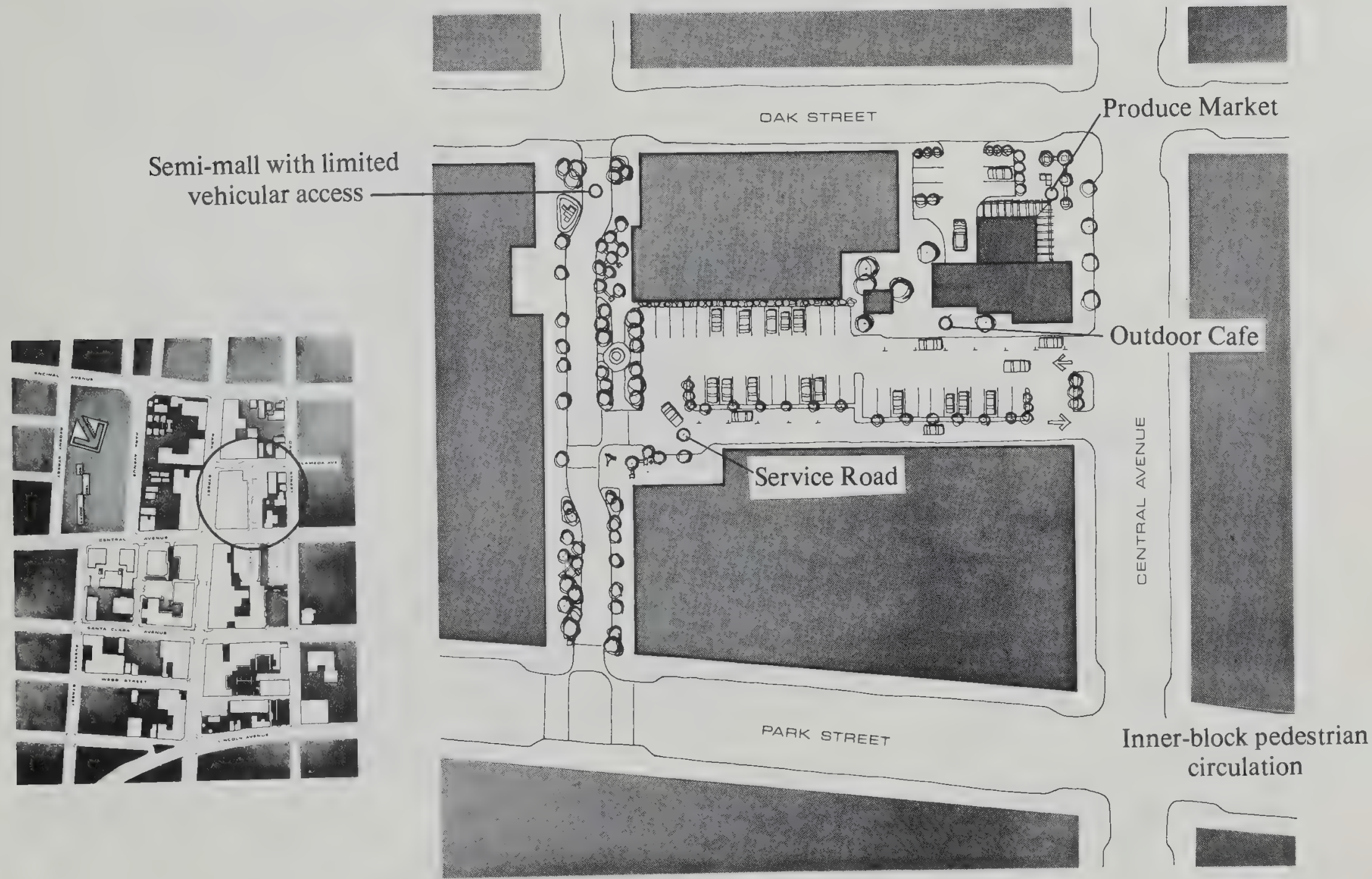


areas adjacent to their shops. These exceptions will be assessed on individual merit and suitable alternatives will be explored before a loading zone is granted. Stricter enforcement of loading zones will prevent the abuse of parking privileges by commercial vehicles not engaged in the activity of loading or unloading.

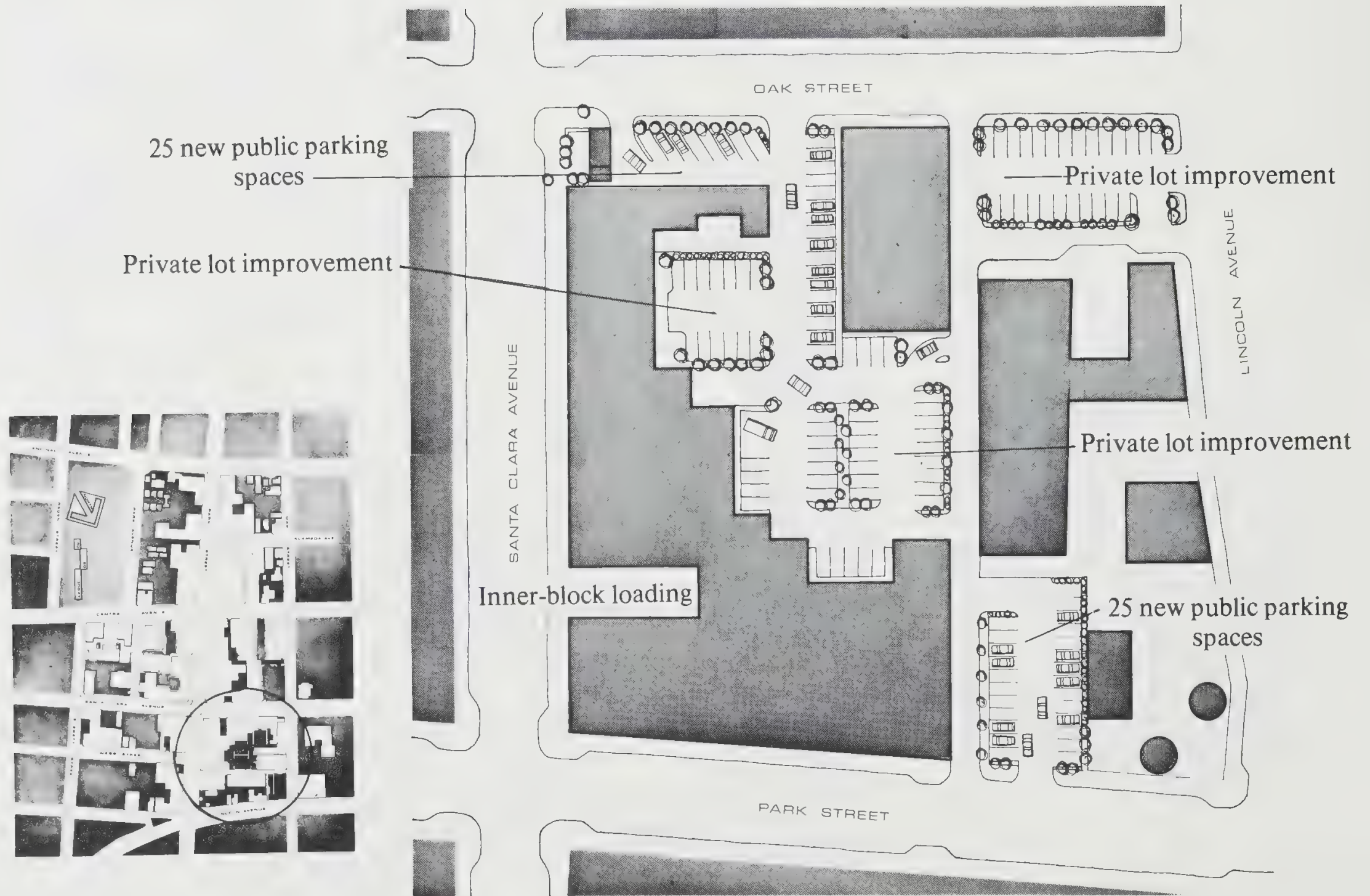
In summary, the following recommendations are made:

1. Time limits at metered parking stalls should be enforced to ensure proper turnover and deter meter feeding.
2. Monthly meter patrons should be restricted to specific areas of municipal lots.
3. Existing parking lots should be restructured to meet adopted parking standards.
4. Unnecessary parking lot ingress and egress should be eliminated to minimize traffic conflicts with adjoining street, i.e., all parking spaces should be accessible without re-entering the street.
5. Municipal parking lot A should be expanded in stages.
6. Additional inner-block parking lots to service City Hall and downtown should be established.
7. The City should consider the future construction of a parking structure, if warranted by anticipated economic growth and retail expansion.
8. No additional private lots should be established within the district.
9. The possibility of establishing a parking assessment district should be explored as a funding source for limited free parking in municipal lots.

IMPROVEMENTS TO MUNI LOT C



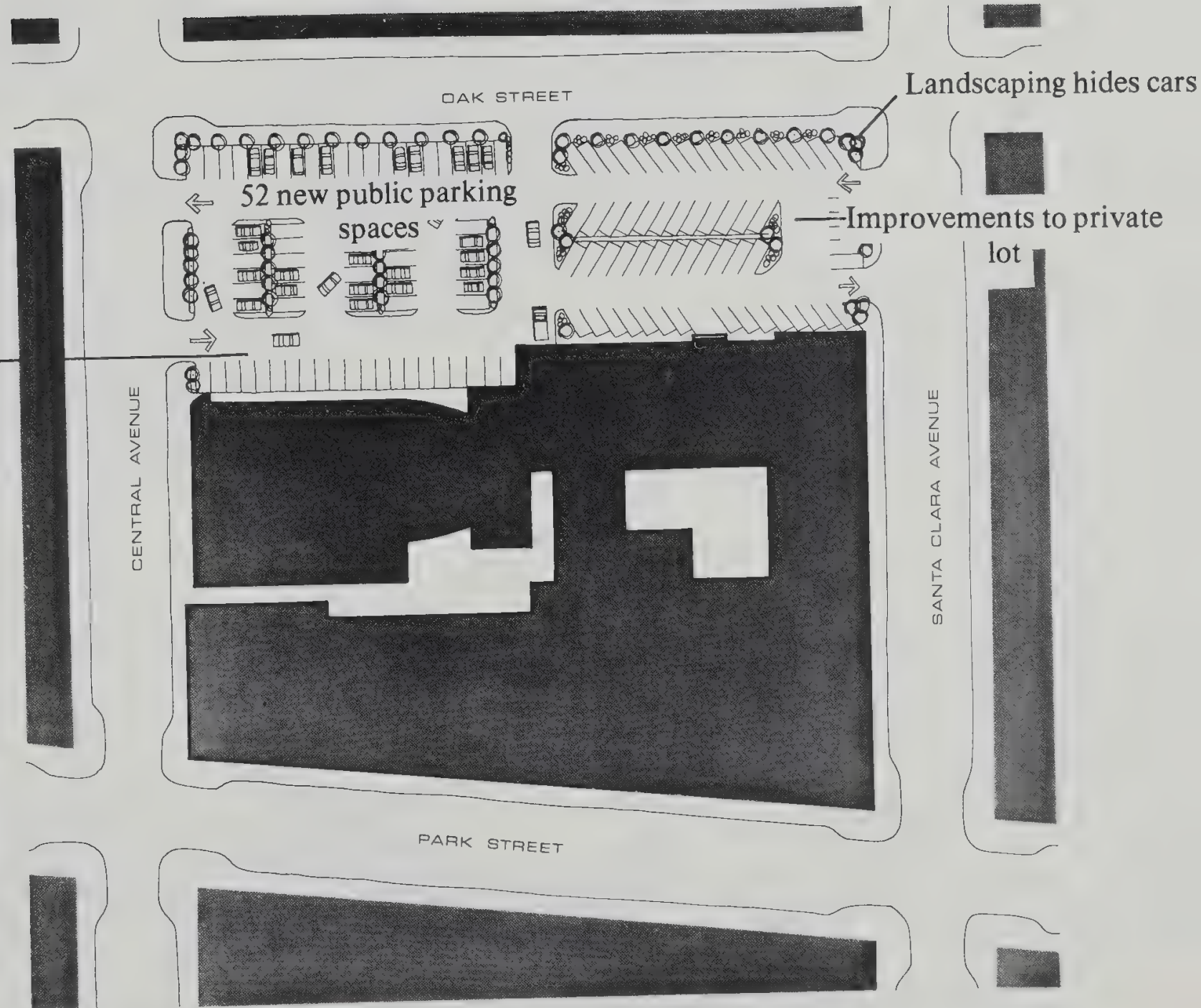
NEW PARKING



NEW PARKING



Theater parking



Streetscaping

The Community Task Force on Housing and Physical Planning called for the creation of an overall civic image or identity which would be promoted through a community design theme. They recognized that such an image would unify Alameda residents and promote the City as a whole. They felt specifically that **commercial** areas should present a distinct image to the public.

The major components of a community design theme are buildings, signs, landscaping and public outdoor spaces such as street, sidewalks and parking areas.

BUILDINGS

The existing architecture in the Park Street District is a blend of the traditional and the non-descript. Though the area possesses several buildings of architectural note, lack of exterior maintenance and insensitive architectural treatment contribute to an overall bland appearance. Creating a unified, attractive physical image involves coordinating building elements such as proportion, texture, and color, so that the scale and rhythm of the street wall is maintained and the dis-

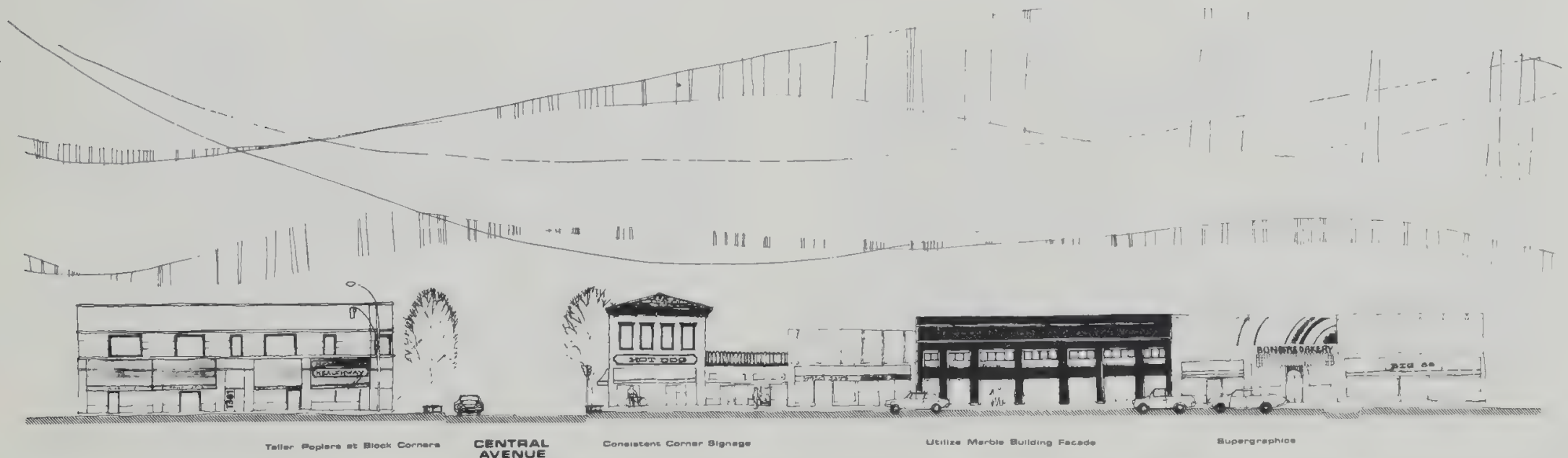


tinct character of the area is enhanced. Therefore, the following recommendations are made:

1. Facades which are out-of-scale because of large wall expanses, height, or bulk should be modified with cosmetic treatment such as architectural detailing, awnings, or paint.
2. The District possesses a number of brick structures. Because of its distinctive texture and color, natural brick is a unifying element which should be exploited wherever possible.
3. A color palette of 8 - 10 harmonious and subdued colors plus black, white and grey, should be established for Park Street buildings.
4. A system of coordinated awnings and canopies should be established along the Park Street frontage as a means of unifying and enlivening the appearance of the shopping district.



Little attention has been given to the appearance at the rear of buildings along Park Street although this is often the approach for many shoppers coming from municipal parking lots. Rear entrances are mostly obscure and unattractive or hidden by numerous, unsightly sheds. Improving these entrances to be attractive and inviting encourages pedestrian flow throughout the district by providing additional links between parking areas and street activity.



SIGNAGE

Graphic displays presently existing on Park Street reflect an outdated strip commercial character where oversized and garish signs futilely compete for the attention of the passing motorist. Through sensitive design, commercial signage can still appeal to the automobilist, maintain a desired pedestrian scale, and convey a sense of visual continuity in the District.



COMMERCIAL SIGNAGE



The commercial sign requirements for business within the Park Street District should be designed so that:

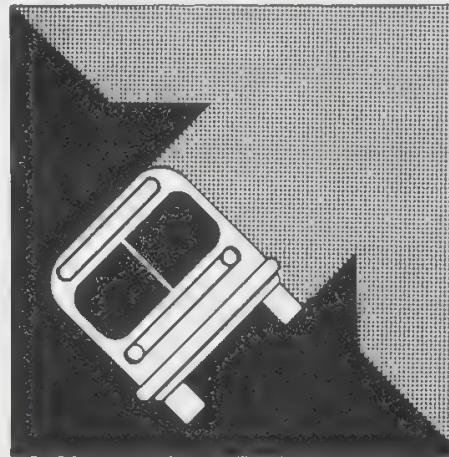
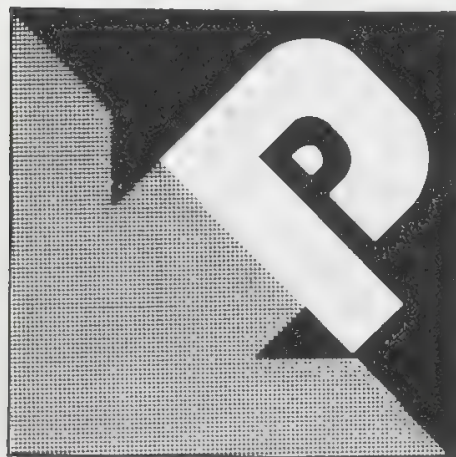
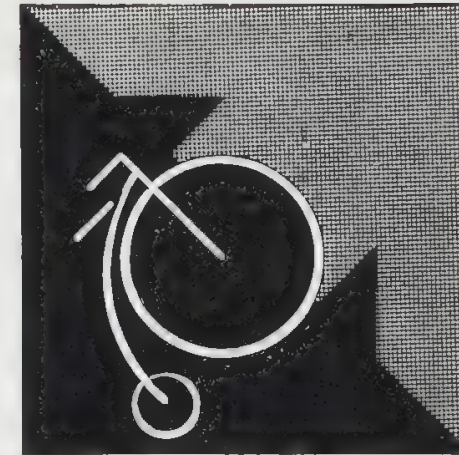
1. All commercial establishments are provided with adequate means of identification.
2. Signs add a sense of visual interest and vitality to the area through sensitive design.
3. Signs are in scale with, do not dominate (and ideally complement) the architecture of the buildings to which they are attached.
4. Randomly placed and superfluous signs are eliminated (including temporary window signs and sandwich signs on sidewalks).
5. A sign pattern is created which is intended for pedestrian viewing and easily visible from pedestrian area.
6. Signs could be incorporated within the system of awnings and canopies along Park Street frontage.



PEDESTRIAN SIGNS

The pedestrianization of downtown means making it convenient for people to use. This includes immediately recognizable signs or symbols which tell people where they can park their car, where they can catch a bus, or where they can have lunch. Signs of this sort can encourage pedestrian movement throughout the area, creating a continuous network that strengthens the overall urban fabric. A standard system of “signs for people” is recommended which:

1. Clearly identifies off-street parking facilities for cars and bicycles.
2. Identifies bus stops and describes relevant buslines.
3. Orients people to businesses and public facilities in the district.
4. Announces community events and special program (bulletin board).



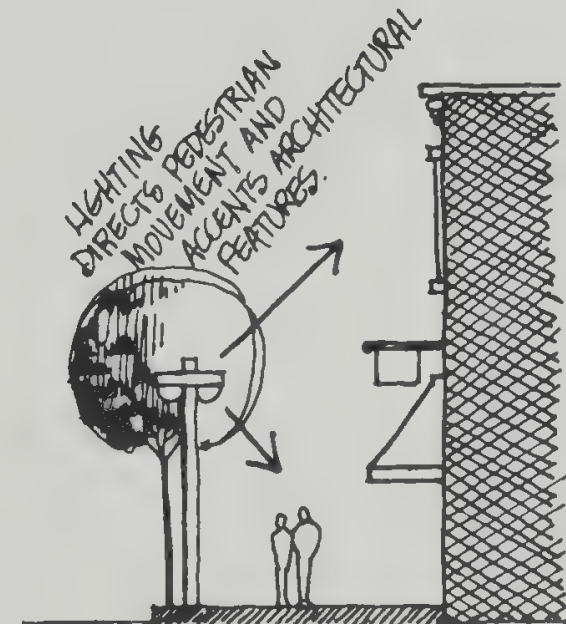
LANDSCAPING

At present the Park Street downtown communicates a harsh image. Surface parking lots display large areas of bare pavement. Sidewalks are dirty and drab. Already sparse planting suffers from poor maintenance. Window ledges and bus stops provide inadequate rest areas.

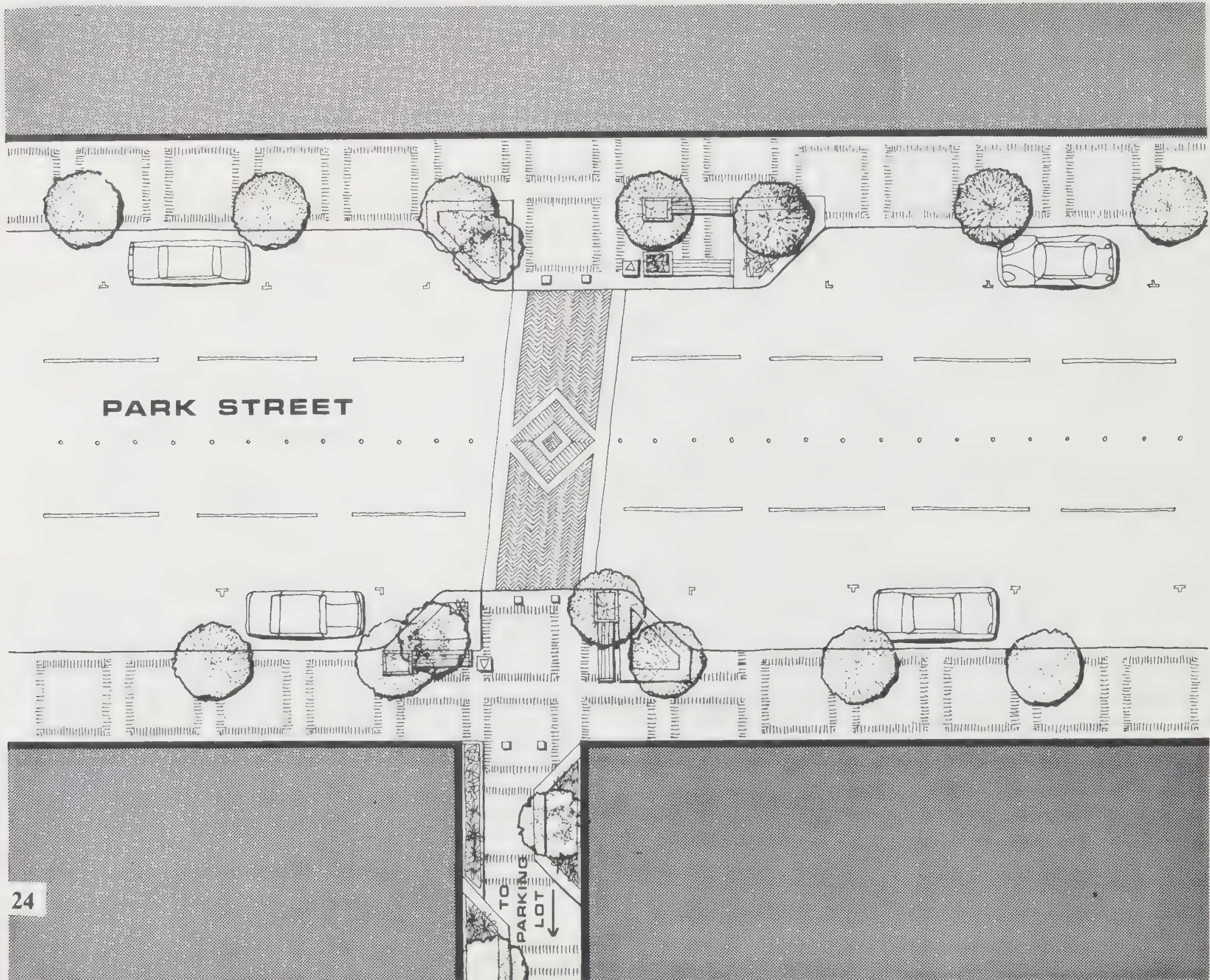
A landscaping scheme which includes thematic paving, lighting, planting and street furniture can soften that image and give it distinct form. Paving compliments shop facades, dresses up the street itself, and efficiently identifies pedestrian areas.

Lighting accents physical strengths and directs pedestrian movement. Planting softens hard lines of street and building edges and adds vibrant color accents. Trees absorb odors from auto emission and muffle street noise. Attractive public open spaces make pedestrian links into nodes of activity in themselves. Recommended improvements include:

- a. Thematic paving in all pedestrian areas. Brick is suggested to compliment the District's many brick structures.
- b. The undergrounding of utilities in conjunction with new sidewalk construction to remove unsightly power lines from the streetscape.
- c. Thematic lighting along Park Street frontage and in adjacent pedestrian areas.
- d. Street trees along Park Street frontage, in pedestrian areas, and in parking lots. Since "Alameda" in Spanish means "public walk shaded with trees" this is suggested as a major design theme.
- e. Small scale planting in pedestrian areas which could be maintained by community groups.
- f. Sheltered seating at major bus stops.
- g. Street furniture at specified pedestrian rest areas in the District, including seating, trash receptacles, newspaper receptacles, public bulletin boards, bike racks.

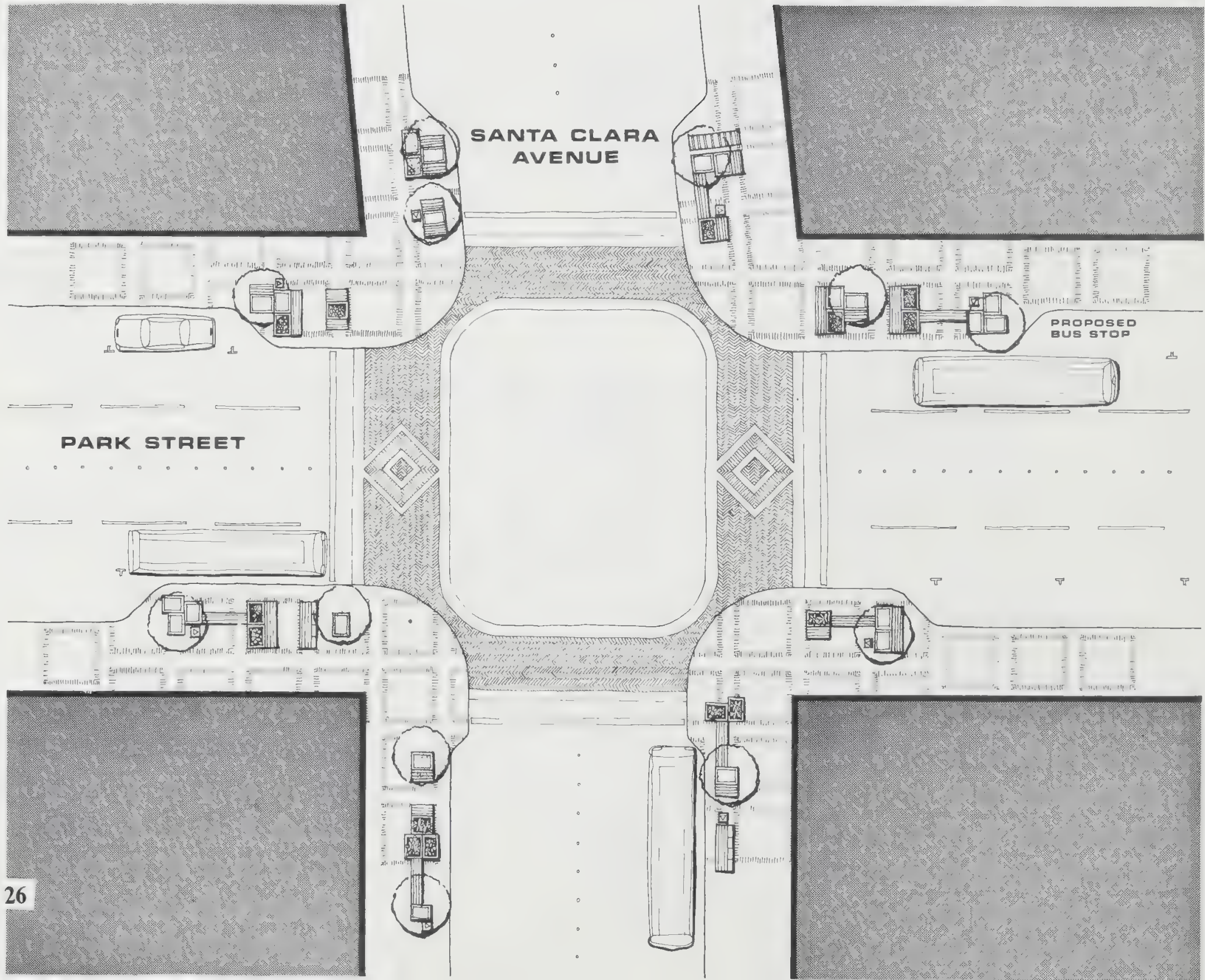


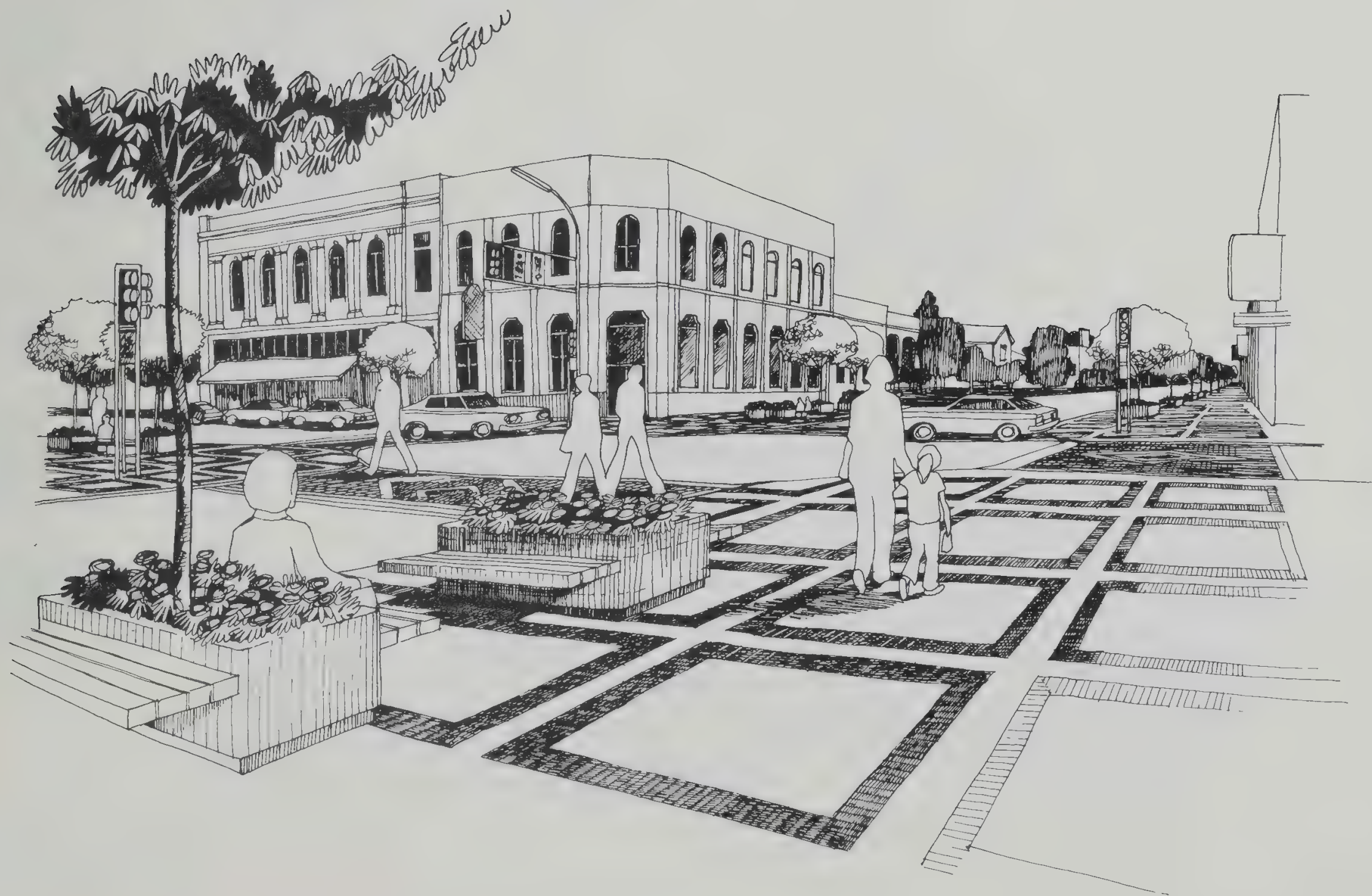
CONCEPTUAL MID-BLOCK CROSSING



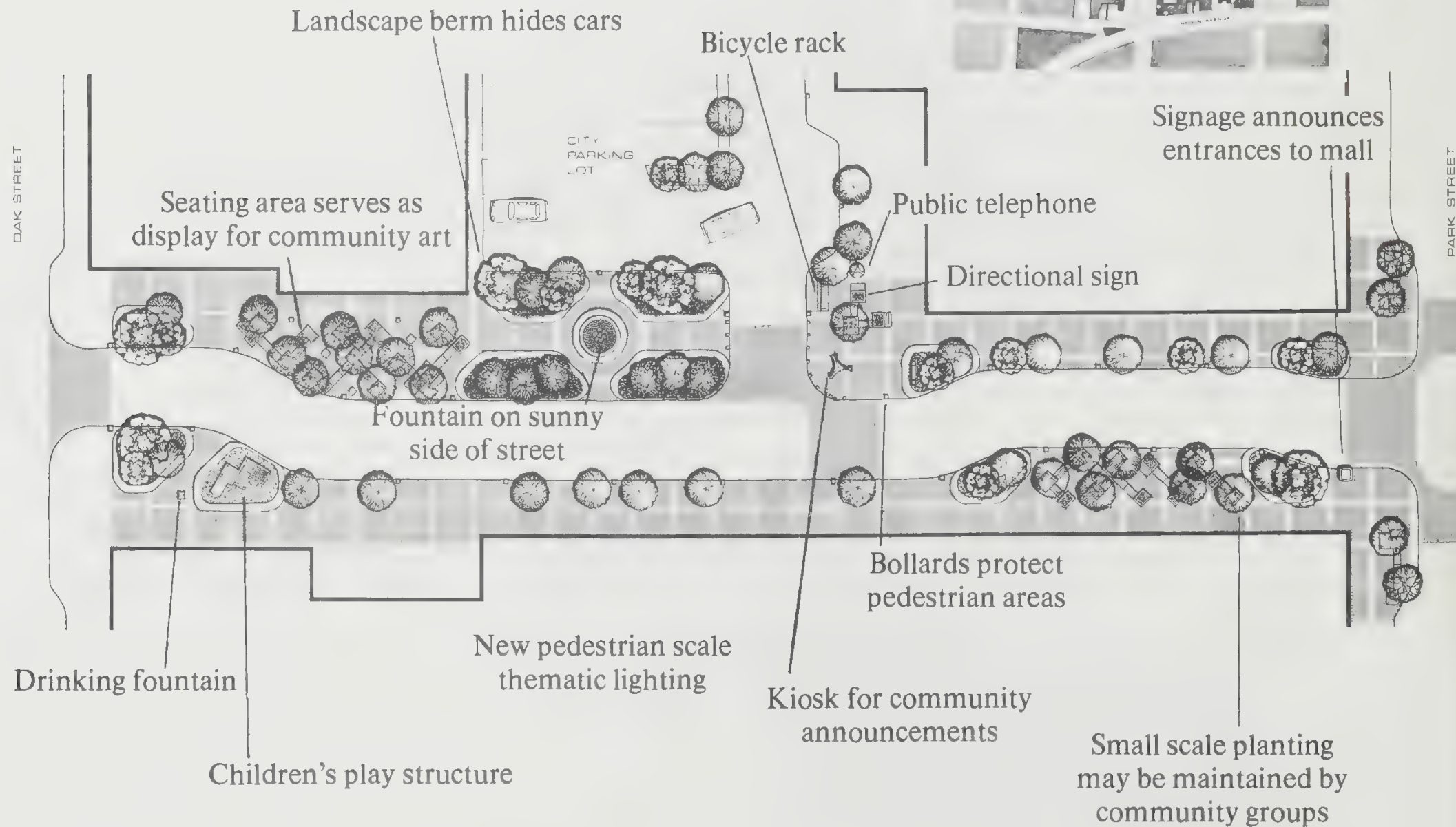


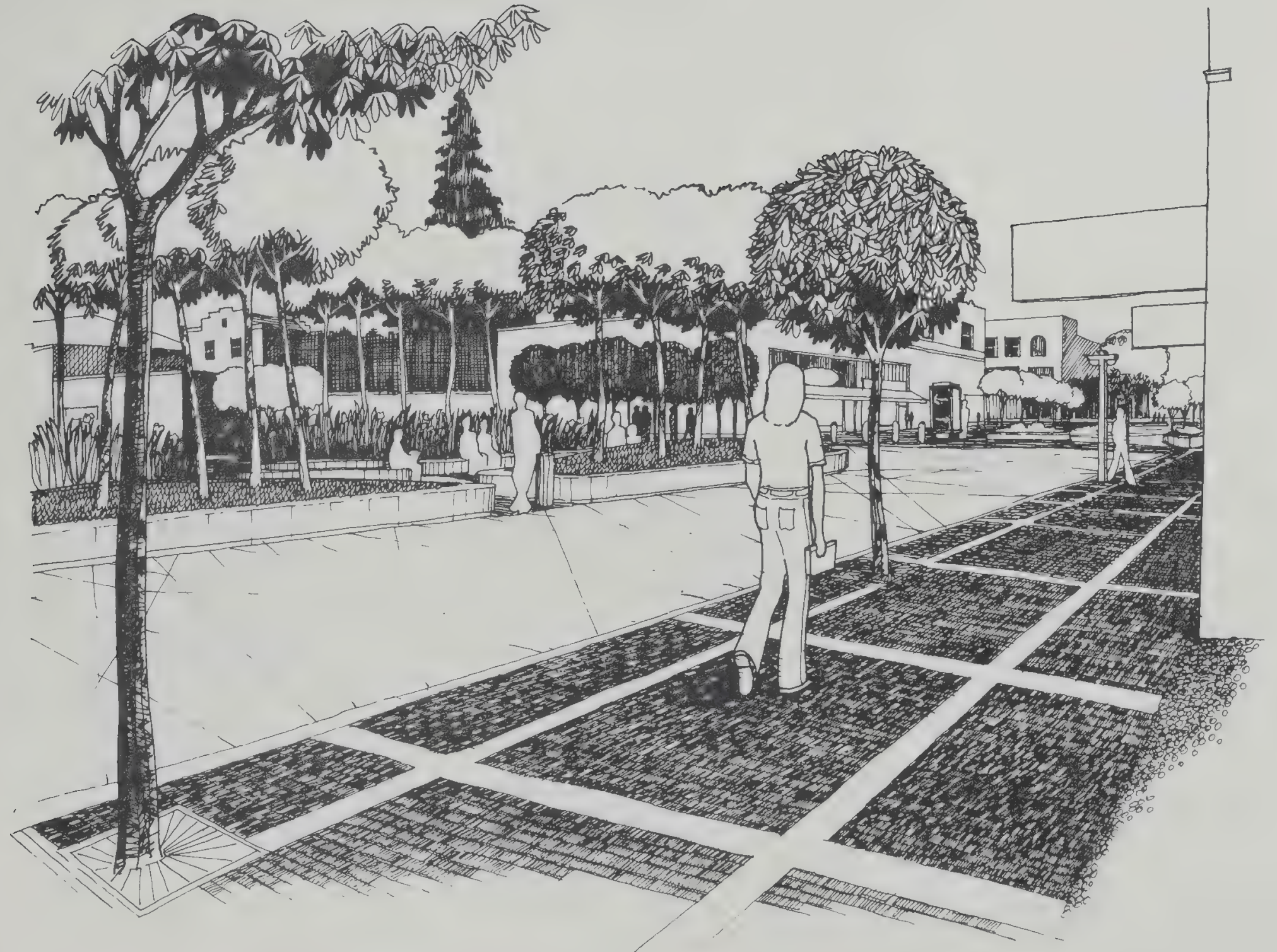
CONCEPTUAL INTERSECTION





LANDSCAPED SEMI-MALL





Land Use Recommendations

Image-making downtown involves more than visual attractiveness, and a “sense of place” is engendered as much by “what goes on” as by “how it looks”. Downtown’s physical identity can only serve to bespeak a more significant symbolic identity as the center of the City’s urban activity. Thus physical revitalization can act as a catalyst for economic and social revitalization **only** if it succeeds in drawing people downtown.

Land Use planning dictates the arrangement of activities in a given area. The compaction or dispersion of these activities can encourage, impede, or preclude pedestrian flow. As the strength of downtown is ultimately a function of the amount, variety, and type of activity available, the following land use recommendations are made for the Park Street District:

- a. Studies of retail operations have shown that shoppers will generally follow a retail frontage until a major break, such as a non-retail use, parking lot, or vacant store occurs. Therefore,
 - 1. Strict retail use at ground level along Park Street is desirable.

- 2. Unbuilt land (e.g., surface parking) along District’s street frontage is undesirable.
- b. A study made of several downtown areas in the U. S. revealed that a greater number of downtown shoppers traveled from work, rather than from home. As downtown workers generate retail activity more office uses are desirable in the District. (This will have an economic effect of attracting more private investment downtown. If a sufficient demand for services exists, private investors will recognize and be attracted by the potential of adequate return.)
- c. The area possesses only a small number of businesses that generate activity during evening hours. Businesses (e.g., entertainment, recreation, retail) which operate during extended hours are desirable.
- d. Quickstop traffic generating businesses are not desirable as

they undermine pedestrian orientation in the District.

- e. Housing in mixed use structures are desirable because:
 - 1. Residential density comprises a sizable daytime captive market for retail and service businesses.
 - 2. It generates pedestrian activity at all hours of the day and night.
 - 3. It ameliorates the blighting problem with respect to existing housing in the district.
- f. Hotel and motel facilities are desirable in the outer ring of the district as tourists provide another source of customers for the District’s retail shops, restaurants and entertainment centers.
- g. Community-oriented uses are desirable to:
 - 1. Reinforce downtown as a community center by draw-

ing more residents into the district.

2. Add to the variety of activity available.
3. Bring a rich mixture of people downtown.

h. Public open space in the Park Street District is desirable as:

1. It provides a setting for outdoor community activity and special events.
2. It provides needed pedestrian rest areas for shoppers and workers.
3. It serves adjacent neighborhoods which lack open space. (The Central and East Central neighborhoods together possess only 2.8 acres of community open space not associated with public schools, even though they are two of the City's denser residential areas).

Funding Program

The key to the implementation of the Park Street Plan is funding. While most of the recommendations contained in the plan need cost-ing-out in detail, it is possible to discuss some general ways in which these improvements can be funded.

There are three basic ways in which on-going public improvements in specific districts can be financed, as well as a variety of one-time funding sources for specific activities.

1. The Vehicle Parking District Law of 1941 is a district act which permits the cost of acquiring and improving parking lots to be assessed against the properties in the district. This appears to be the most widely used technique because it places the cost burden on those people to be benefited. Since the cost is financed by assessment rather than by future revenue, free parking or parking at a low-rate can be provided. However, the Act only discusses parking lot acquisition and improvement, and cannot be used to finance the other public improvements proposed in this Plan.
2. The second major financing technique involves the issuance of revenue bonds for the acquisition and improvement of off-street parking areas. The bonds are repaid by revenue from on and off-street parking meter revenue (Parking Law of 1949); or by a combination of the off-street parking meter revenue and limited assessments on properties within the district (Vehicle Parking District

Law of 1951). The 1949 Act is not a district law and could be applied to on and off-street metered parking throughout the City. It involves no taxes or assessments on properties, but it does mean that the meter revenues must be adjusted to pay off the bonds as they fall due. The 1951 legislation is a district Act which issues bonds that are repaid from on and off-street parking meter revenues from within the district. However, if the property owners feel that the meter revenues may not be adequate for the bond repayments, a limited property assessment can also be included.

3. The third major financing technique involves the establishment of a special business license tax within the district, to provide revenue for a variety of public improvements. (Parking and Business Improvement Area Law of 1965). However, the additional business license revenue cannot be used to repay bonds unless the electors have approved the arrangement by a two-thirds vote. Without this voter approval, the Act can only provide improvements on a pay-as-you-go basis. Given the extent of public improvements and land acquisition recommended in this plan, it is doubtful that this approach would produce sufficient revenue within a short enough period to make it a viable financing tool.

In addition to these three major financing tools, there are some other funds available for specific purposes: The Small Business Administration has a variety of loans available for the rehabilitation and general

operation of small businesses. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) provides Section 312 loans for the rehabilitation of commercial properties. In addition, HUD provides the City with over \$1,000,000 per year through the Housing and Community Development Act, and general public improvements are an eligible activity. Among the public improvements that are eligible for Community Development Funds is the development and improvement of a mall on Alameda Avenue. Indeed many of the proposed public improvements meet the eligibility requirements for federal assistance, e.g., street improvements, signage, landscaping, and parking improvements.

Some or all of these sources could be used in conjunction with the major funding mechanisms. Depending upon when the improvements are undertaken, it would seem that the bond or assessment approaches to financing improvements would be the best vehicle to use in the Park Street area.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The Park Street Plan makes the following recommendations:

A. PARKING and CIRCULATION RECOMMENDATIONS

1. A landscaped semi-mall on Alameda Avenue between Park Street and Oak Street.
2. Improvements to Municipal Lots A and C. This will result in the loss of some parking spaces which will have to be replaced elsewhere.
3. Three suggested sites for additional public parking lots.
4. Expanded landscaped pedestrian zones at key intersections.
5. Mid-block landscaped pedestrian crosswalk with street furniture.
6. A two-stage development area with a public parking lot expanding into a low-profile parking structure with offices, retail space, and restaurants.
7. Left turn lanes for traffic coming off the bridge before it reaches the main Park Street area.
8. Synchronized traffic lights to facilitate traffic flow through the area.
9. Encouraging development of loading areas at rear entrances to shops wherever possible.
10. Scheduling of trucks around peak traffic hours.
11. No additional private lots should be established within the district.

B. DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS

12. Facades which are out of scale because of large wall expanses, height or bulk should be modified with cosmetic treatment such as architectural detailing, awnings or paint.
13. The district possesses a number of brick structures. Because of its distinctive texture and color, natural brick is a unifying element which should be exploited wherever possible.
14. A color palette of 8 - 10 harmonious and subdued colors plus black, white and gray should be established for Park Street buildings.
15. A system of coordinated awnings and canopies should be established along the Park Street frontage as a means of unifying and enlivening the appearance of the shopping district.
16. Rear entrances to stores should be improved.
17. Commercial signs in the area should be sensitively designed, be in scale with the building, be removed if superfluous, and should be visible to the pedestrians.
18. There should be a standard system of signs for people which identify off-street parking areas, bus stops and community events.
19. Pedestrian walkways in the area should be thematically designed, preferably in brick.

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20. Electrical utilities should be undergrounded.
 21. Thematic lighting should be installed along Park Street.
 22. Street trees in all pedestrian areas are suggested as a major design theme.
 23. Sheltered seating at major bus stops.
 24. Street furniture at specified pedestrian rest areas in the district, including seating, trash receptacles, newspaper receptacles, public bulletin boards, bicycle racks and other items.

C. LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS

25. Strict retail use at ground level should be encouraged.
26. Surface parking along the Park Street frontage is undesirable.
27. Office space should be developed in the area to provide a captive market for local stores.
28. Housing in mixed use structures should be a conforming use in commercial areas because it too, provides a local market for stores.
29. Community centers, hotels and additional open spaces are all desirable uses around the periphery of the district.

Conclusions

The preparation of this plan is merely the first step towards the regeneration of Park Street. The major land acquisition and improvement proposals made in this will require the support of a majority of property owners in the area if they are to be funded and implemented. If the proposed sites for additional parking facilities are endorsed, the first step towards plan implementation should probably be the establishment of the parking district, to issue bonds or assessments, or both, to finance the necessary improvements.



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